ground water contamination, fate and transport of pollutants, and technologies and strategies for ground water protection. The federal government should also establish criteria, guidelines, and standards for important ground water contaminants to ensure national consistency and avoid duplication of efforts among states. In addition, the federal government should provide training of state and local officials in ground water management and protection.

## Political Mobilization, Public Participation, and Support

Successful ground water protection programs emerge from circumstances where political support is mobilized for the passage and implementation of effective policies. Ground water degradation has been slow in emerging as a major health and environmental issue because the resource is generally invisible to the public; it is linked in complex ways to land and other resource uses. Causes and effects of pollution are hard to identify and poorly understood. In order for the ground water issue to take a high-priority position on the public agenda, the issue needs to be perceived as a matter of broad social concern as well as one requiring technical resolution. To facilitate political mobilization, public participation, and support, the committee recommends the following at every governmental level:

- Decision-making processes concerning ground water should be characterized by openness, should reflect consideration of public attitudes, and should include active participation of public health and environmental interest groups, industry, and the public.
- Attention should be directed to the need to attract and develop high-level political leadership to shepherd ground water protection legislation and ensure commitment to continued funding and implementation of ground water programs.
- Communication networks must be established and maintained between ground water program managers and the media. Media coverage of ground water issues is more likely to be fair and balanced when managers have established a reputation for openness and accuracy. The scientific community should also share responsibility for assisting in dissemination of clear, accurate, and understandable information by the media.
- The sharing and exchange of information regarding ground water protection problems and programs for their resolution should be an ongoing component of every program. This may be achieved through various activities and mechanisms, including regular community meetings, workshops, and symposia that provide full opportunity for discussion, reaction, and recommendation by the interested community concerning the program and issues.
- Ongoing educational activities about ground water in the context of envi-